

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 04 FEBRUARY 2018

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

The South African Radio League broadcasts a news bulletin each Sunday in Afrikaans as well as English, at 08:15 and 08:30 Central African Time respectively, on HF as well as on various VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. The bulletin is relayed via Echolink by ZS6JPL. A podcast is available on the League website.

Audio and text bulletins may be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za where you can also sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

We start the Bulletin with news of a Silent Key:

It is with deep regret that the Boland Amateur Radio Club must announce that the key of Hans Nothling, ZS1WZ, went silent on Saturday 27 January 2018. Hans joined the SARL and Boland Branch in 1961 and was an honorary member of the Boland ARC. Hans was 89 years young.

We extend our deepest sympathies to his wife Eileen, children and many friends.

PAUSE

In the news today:

THE AWA CW ACTIVITY DAY THIS AFTERNOON

BRIEF SPORADIC-E OPENING ON 27 JANUARY

and

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

THE AWA CW ACTIVITY DAY

This afternoon, 4 February from 15:00 to 17:00 CAT you can participate in the AWA CW Activity Day. The aim of the CW Activity Day is for participants to contact as many amateurs as possible on the 20, 40 and 80 metre amateur bands using CW. There are 5 categories using QRP and High Power. Certificates for the categories will be given to the highest points scored. Frequencies between 14 000 to 14 060 kHz; 7 000 to 7 035 kHz and 3 500 to 3 560 kHz can be used, the exchange is a RST report, your call sign and grid square. Logs in ADIF or Excel spread sheets to be sent to andyzs6ady@vodamail.co.za. Check the 2018 Blue Book for all the details before 15:00 UTC today.

THE SARL NATIONAL FIELD DAY AND THE CQ WPX RTTY CONTEST NEXT WEEKEND

Next weekend, 10 and 11 February you can participate in the National Field Day which runs from 10:00 UTC on the Saturday to 10:00 UTC on the Sunday

as well as the CQ WPX RTTY Contest which runs the whole weekend with single ops limited to 30 hours.

The activity for the National Field Day takes place on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 metres and you may use phone, CW, RTTY and PSK. The exchange is the number of transmitters, the Field Day operating class and the Provincial abbreviation. The sending of a RS or RST is optional it has nothing to do with the scoring. There are six classes of participation - Class A Field Station, Multi operator; Class B Field Station, Multi operator, QRP; Class C Field Station, Single Operator; Class D Field Station, Single Operator, QRP; for the more adventurous Class E Ultra Light Portable and of course Class F - General Stations for those who may not leave home! Please refer to the 2018 SARL Contest Manual for all the relevant information about setting up the station, the scoring and other details.

Logs in ADIF, Cabrillo or MS Excel format with a summary sheet labelled "my call sign NFD," be sent by e-mail to contest@sarl.org.za before 18 February. Please note the new address for your log sheets. And do not forget the photographs of your station in action.

Visit www.cqwpxrty.com/ for all the information about the CQ WPX RTTY contest.

BRIEF SPORADIC-E OPENING ON 27 JANUARY

At 08:47 UTC on 27 January 2018, Willie, ZS2CC, reported a Sporadic E opening on 11 metres, while he later posted a recording of the 50,044 MHz beacon from Polokwane. Willie then had a two-way Sporadic E contact with Paul, ZS6NK. Around 09:19 UTC, Paul, ZS6NK reported the band was going down. Pieter, V51PJ, started calling Paul and later switched to FSK441. At 09:59 UTC, Chris, ZS1TX, posted a video of the 50,044 MHz beacon heard in Cape Town and ZS6NK and V51PJ logged their digital QSO. Willie, ZS2CC, reported at 10:13 UTC that the 11 metre band was also closed.

You are listening to a news Bulletin of the South African Amateur Radio League.

THE RADIO ZS ANTENNA DESIGN COMPETITION

Six entries were received for the Radio ZS Antenna Design Competition made up of one entry for the low category, three for the middle category and two for the high category. The six entries were published in the January and February 2018 issues of Radio ZS. Thank you to Rory Norton, ZS2BL, who sponsored the dual band antenna for the High category and to Dennis Green, ZS4BS, who sponsored the other three prizes.

The winner of the Low category is Eddie Leighton, ZS6BNE. The winners for the Middle category is Rob Bareham, ZS1SA and Andrew Roos, ZS5U The winner of the High category is Christie Grobbelaar, ZS4CGR.

Well done Eddie, Rob, Andrew and Christie!

DEADLINE FOR THE PEARS VHF/UHF CONTEST LOG SHEETS

The deadline for the Pears National VHF and UHF Contest is Wednesday 14 February 2018. This should have given everybody ample time to prepare their log sheets in any form they like, recheck it for accuracy and then submit it to PEARS. If you have a difficulty with the calculations, then we will gladly do it for you. We need as many log sheets as possible, irrespective of the scores, to prepare a map of VHF activity including propagation conditions during the contest days. The address for your log sheets is the Port Elizabeth Amateur Radio Society, PO Box 10402, Linton Grange 6015, Port Elizabeth or by e-mail to mikecbosch@gmail.com

CANADIAN RADIO AMATEUR FINDS RESURRECTED NASA SATELLITE

When he is not on amateur radio, Scott Tilley, VA7LF, an amateur astronomer, hunts spy satellites. Using an S-band radio from his home in Roberts Creek, British Columbia, Tilley routinely scans the skies for radio signals from classified objects orbiting Earth, according to a recent article on Spaceweather.com. Earlier this month, he saw the signature of IMAGE (Imager for Magnetopause-to-Aurora Global Exploration), a NASA spacecraft believed to have died in December 2005. The discovery has delighted space scientists.

“The long gone and nearly forgotten IMAGE spacecraft has come back to life and been detected by an amateur astronomer,” said Mission Manager Richard J. Burley at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Centre (GSFC), which confirmed that what Tilley spotted is, indeed, IMAGE. Amateur observer Paul Marsh, M0EYT, in the UK, provided the first independent confirmation of the IMAGE signal. On January 29, NASA said that observations from five sites were consistent with the RF characteristics expected of IMAGE.

Read more in the ARRL Letter dated 1 February 2018.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to remain at very low levels. There are currently no sunspots visible and no flaring is expected. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. The 15 to 30 metre bands will provide lots of DX fun. Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

Finally, a Diary of some upcoming events:

This afternoon the AWA CW Activity Day. 10 and 11 February the SARL National Field Day and the CQ WPX RTTY competition 13 February World Radio Day 14 February closing date for PEARS VHF/UHF logs 17 February the SARL Youth Sprint 17 and 18 February the ARRL DX CW competition. 24 February the West Rand ARC Flea Market. 25 February the SARL Digital competition. 28 February closing date for proposals and synopsis for AMSAT

SA Space Symposium papers and the closing date for nominations for the SARL Amateur Radio Hall of Fame.

To conclude our bulletin a quick overview of our main news item:

This afternoon, 4 February from 15:00 to 17:00 CAT you can participate in the AWA CW Activity Day. The aim of the CW Activity Day is for participants to contact as many amateurs as possible on the 20, 40 and 80 metre amateur bands using CW. There are 5 categories using QRP and High Power.

This concludes our bulletin for this morning.

Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio program, 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The program can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 4 895 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Andy Cairns, ZS6ADY, edited by Dick Stratford, ZS6RO, and read by

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

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